

[10 August, 2000]

RAJYA SABHA

Threat to life of people of Indian origin in Fyi

2089. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that persons of Indian origins living in Fiji Island are living under constant threat;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken up the matter with Commonwealth members; and

(c) what steps are contemplated to protect life and property of those Indians living in Fiji?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) Yes, Sir. Fijians of Indian origin are facing isolation and hardship as a result of the recent crisis.

(b) The matter has been taken up bilaterally with Commonwealth members Australia, United Kingdom and New Zealand and with the Secretary General of the Commonwealth.

(c) In all our interventions in bilateral and multilateral fora, India's effort is on resumption of the democratic process and restoration of a lawfully constituted Government and racial harmony in Fiji. In our opinion, the 1997 Constitution of Fiji provided an appropriate framework for these ends.

Threat to life and property to Indian in Sierra Leone

2090. SHRI CM. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the reports about the threat of life and property of Indians in Sierra Leone, particularly the special report captioned "Captive in Freetown" published in the Indian Express of 2nd July, 2000.

(b) if so, the number of Indians in Sierra Leone and how many of them have fled to India; and

(c) the steps taken to ensure the security of life and property of these NRIs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF